

In the United States Court of Federal Claims
OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS
No. 21-1228V

SAVANNAH SHARPE,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

Chief Special Master Corcoran

Filed: June 13, 2025

*Timothy William O'Hara, Marvin Firestone MD, JD & Associates, LLP, San Mateo, CA,
for Petitioner.*

Madelyn Weeks, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for Respondent.

DECISION ON ATTORNEY'S FEES AND COSTS¹

On April 16, 2021, Savannah Sharpe filed a petition for compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. §300aa-10, *et seq.*² (the "Vaccine Act"). Petitioner alleged that she suffered a shoulder injury related to vaccine administration following a DTaP vaccination she received on July 16, 2019. Petition, ECF No. 1. On August 1, 2024, I issued a decision awarding compensation to Petitioner based on the Respondent's proffer. ECF No. 41.

¹Because this Decision contains a reasoned explanation for the action taken in this case, it must be made publicly accessible and will be posted on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website, and/or at <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/uscourts/national/cofc>, in accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002. 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2018) (Federal Management and Promotion of Electronic Government Services). **This means the Decision will be available to anyone with access to the internet.** In accordance with Vaccine Rule 18(b), Petitioner has 14 days to identify and move to redact medical or other information, the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy. If, upon review, I agree that the identified material fits within this definition, I will redact such material from public access.

² National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755. Hereinafter, for ease of citation, all section references to the Vaccine Act will be to the pertinent subparagraph of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa (2018).

Petitioner has now filed a motion for attorney's fees and costs, requesting an award of \$39,207.47 (representing \$38,680.37 in fees plus \$527.10 in costs). Application for Attorneys' Fees and Costs ("Motion") filed January 22, 2025, ECF No. 46. Furthermore, Petitioner filed a signed statement representing that she incurred \$50.00 in personal out-of-pocket expenses. ECF No. 46 at 51.

Respondent reacted to the motion on January 24, 2025, indicating that he is satisfied the statutory requirements for an award of attorneys' fees and costs are met in this case but deferring resolution of the amount to be awarded to my discretion. Motion at 2-4, ECF No. 47. Petitioner filed no reply thereafter.

I have reviewed the billing records submitted with Petitioner's request. Petitioner requests that I adopt the hourly rates of \$500.00 for work performed by attorney Michael Firestone in 2025, and the hourly rate of \$530.00 for 2024 work performed by attorney Tim O'Hara. In my experience, the proposed rates are reasonable overall, and I find no cause to reduce the requested hours or rates. Respondent offered no specific objection to the rates or amounts sought.

I have also reviewed the requested costs. Petitioner's counsel has provided supporting documentation for claimed litigation costs (ECF No. 46 at 25-27), except for \$50.00 dollars claimed for Petitioner's personal out-of-pocket expenses. I will nevertheless reimburse these costs in full, since the unsubstantiated amount is not particularly large. But Petitioner's counsel should be aware that any future requests for costs may result in a curtailed (or denied) award for failure to include the required supporting documentation. See Guidelines for Practice Under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program at 75-78 (emphasis added).³

The Vaccine Act permits an award of reasonable attorney's fees and costs for successful claimants. Section 15(e). Accordingly, I hereby GRANT Petitioner's Motion for attorney's fees and costs. **Petitioner is awarded attorneys' fees and costs in the total amount of \$39,207.47 (representing \$38,680.37 in fees plus \$527.10 in costs) to be paid through an ACH deposit to Petitioner's counsel's IOLTA account for prompt disbursement.** In the absence of a timely-filed motion for review (see Appendix B to the

³ The guidelines for Practice Under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program can be found at: <https://www.uscfc.uscourts.gov/guidelines-practice-under-national-vaccine-injury-compensation-program>

Rules of the Court), the Clerk of Court shall enter judgment in accordance with this decision.⁴

IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/Brian H. Corcoran
Brian H. Corcoran
Chief Special Master

⁴ Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), the parties may expedite entry of judgment by filing a joint notice renouncing their right to seek review.